

Unity of Effort in an Irregular Environment: Empowering the Joint Force Commander

**A Monograph
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Abstract

Unity of Effort in an Irregular Environment: Empowering the Joint Force Commander, by COL Myron J. Reineke, U.S. Army, 40 pages.

The United States today finds itself in an era of persistent irregular conflict, the root cause of which may be illegitimate governance within failed or failing states. The resulting instability will likely require future U.S. military and civilian agency intervention to assist host nations to build capacity and maintain legitimacy in the eyes of their populations. Success in these irregular environments will require operating “grand strategically,” integrating the effects of all elements of national power into one coherent strategy under the direction of a single leader. A combination of security concerns and a lack of expeditionary civilian capacity will require the military to assume responsibility for stability tasks better suited to civilian agencies. However, current laws mandate parallel civilian and military chains of command that separate de facto responsibilities from necessary authorities to direct the activities of all elements of statecraft toward the accomplishment of national security objectives. This separation makes it impossible to operate in a “grand strategic” manner as demanded by the character of irregular warfare. In order to improve unity of effort among USG departments and agencies conducting stability operations in a specific theater of action, the President should empower the military joint force commander to coordinate all aspects of the USG effort until the security environment and civilian capacity allow transition to civilian leadership.

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Introduction

During a 27 March 2009 speech given from the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House campus, President Barack Obama announced a new strategy for ongoing operations in Afghanistan and Pakistan. Flanked by Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates, the President authorized 21,000 additional troops to bolster security and declared the need for a stronger, smarter, and more comprehensive strategy that better integrated civilian and military efforts to stabilize the region.¹ National Security Advisor James L. Jones later described President Obama's strategic vision as a three-legged stool. In addition to military operations, greater emphasis on economic development and the rule of law were needed in order to defeat the Taliban's influence in Afghanistan. These non-military parts of the strategy were crucial but in his observation "have always been lagging."²

To implement his new strategy, the President selected General (GEN) Stanley A. McChrystal to command U.S. Forces in Afghanistan and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's (NATO) International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). GEN McChrystal's initial assessment of the situation on the ground concluded that success depended on a properly resourced and integrated civilian-military counterinsurgency (COIN) campaign, requiring better unity of effort in its execution.³ Not only would the mission require more military forces to enhance security, but also additional civilian capacity to improve governance and the local

¹ The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. "Remarks by the President on a New Strategy for Afghanistan and Pakistan," given on 27 March 2009 in the Eisenhower Executive Office Building on the White House Campus. Available at http://www.whitehouse.gov/the_press_office/Remarks-by-the-President-on-a-New-Strategy-for-Afghanistan-and-Pakistan, accessed on 1 November 2009.

² Rajiv Chandrasekaran, "U.S. Forces Launch Afghan Operation," *The Kansas City Star*, 2 July 2009, p. A13.

³ Headquarters, International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). *COMISAF's Initial Assessment (minus classified enclosure)*. Kabul, Afghanistan, 30 August 2009, p. 2-2.

economy. Failure to employ adequate resources in all areas in a coherent, balanced manner would risk a longer, more costly conflict and ultimately could threaten mission success.⁴

The combination of ungoverned territories and international terrorism form the major strategic concern of the post-Cold War era. Military means alone are not sufficient to resolve the underlying causes of conflict that can render states unable to effectively govern their own territory. Yet a lack of expeditionary civilian capacity means that the U.S. military by necessity must assume responsibilities in the areas of governance, economics, and the rule of law on the behalf of appropriate civilian means. The military, however, does not have authority in these areas and is only empowered to achieve the military portions of national security objectives. This mismatch of responsibilities and authorities further undermines operational unity of effort and causes the non-military portions of the strategy to lag behind, potentially increasing the duration and cost of post-conflict operations. Additionally, the transition from post-conflict military occupation to legitimate civilian governance is complicated by the absence of a clear line of authority from the beginning of military intervention until the restoration of sovereignty.

Given the complexity of post-conflict stability operations, including the potential for resistance in the wake of a military intervention, how does the President effectively integrate all elements of national power into one coherent, comprehensive strategy that will achieve his national security objectives? In order to facilitate unity of effort in pursuit of national security objectives and a rapid transition to host-nation sovereignty, the President should empower the joint force commander (JFC) to achieve objectives that lie beyond the military's normal purview within a designated theater of operations. Such empowerment would align the JFC's de facto responsibilities with the necessary authorities to coordinate other elements of national power to achieve national security objectives, create a single line of authority to facilitate the transition

⁴ Ibid, p. 2-21

from military occupation to civilian authority pursuant to conflict, and allow time for other agencies to generate required capabilities to relieve the military of non-traditional responsibilities when able.

Methodology

Using theory, doctrine, and history as a guide, this monograph advocates an expanded role for the JFC in an era of persistent conflict. First, this monograph will show that strategic theory supports a comprehensive, “grand strategic” approach to stability operations integrating all elements of statecraft into a coherent strategy under a single leader. In an insecure, post-conflict environment, the JFC is uniquely able to lead such a coordinated effort, but this is contrary to current command and control structures that separate military and civilian authority between the JFC and the United States (US) Ambassador in a given theater of action.

Second, this monograph will describe how joint doctrine can accommodate a grand strategic approach to irregular warfare. Current doctrine directs the JFC not only to achieve the military objectives of an operation, but also to support the achievement of non-military objectives. However, in the absence of adequate security and expeditionary civilian capacity, this monograph argues that the President must empower the JFC to achieve non-military objectives as well until conditions permit appropriate civilian means to be employed. Emerging doctrine describes a mechanism for transition from military to civilian leadership in the wake of military intervention. This concept implies a model of initial military authority over all elements of national power followed by a transition over time, depending on the security environment, civilian and host-nation capacity, and political considerations.

Finally, this monograph will examine the United States' involvement in the Philippine War from 1899 to 1902 as a successful example of transition from military to civilian leadership in a contested, post-conflict environment. Subsequently, the lessons of theory, doctrine, and history will be applied to draw contemporary conclusions.

Chapter 1: Setting the Stage

An Emerging Strategic Landscape

The character of warfare in the 21st Century is becoming increasingly irregular. America's demonstrated dominance in conventional, regular warfare makes it more likely that future adversaries, state and non-state actors alike, will employ unconventional, asymmetric approaches in order to avoid a direct military confrontation.⁵ While the United States must continue to prepare for conventional threats posed by the regular, uniformed militaries of potentially hostile state actors, it must also adapt to the more unconventional threats typified by non-state actors in conflicts such as Afghanistan and Iraq.⁶ According to the 2010 Quadrennial Defense Review Report, "Over the course of the next several decades, conflicts are at least as likely to result from state weakness as from state strength."⁷

U.S. Defense Secretary Robert Gates describes the Global War on Terror as a prolonged irregular campaign.⁸ Irregular warfare is defined as a violent struggle among state and non-state actors for legitimacy and influence over relevant populations.⁹ At the center of this struggle is a convergence of misgoverned and ungoverned states that enable a variety of violent extremist organizations to operate in their midst. Left unchecked, rogue states seeking to obtain WMD may

⁵ Colin S. Gray, *Another Bloody Century: Future Warfare*, London England: Orion Books, Ltd., 2006, pp. 229-230. See also Department of Defense, *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, February 2010, p. 8.

⁶ Robert M. Gates, "A Balanced Strategy: Reprogramming the Pentagon for a New Age," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 2009, p. 29.

⁷ *Quadrennial Defense Review Report*, p. 9.

⁸ Gates, p. 29.

⁹ Department of Defense, *Irregular Warfare Joint Operating Concept, Version 1.0*, 11 September 2007, p. 6. Hereafter cited as IW JOC.

enable “the world’s most dangerous terrorists [to] acquire the world’s most dangerous weapons” with catastrophic implications.¹⁰

Illegitimate governance may be the root of and the central strategic problem facing the United States in today’s global security environment. A legitimate government derives its authority from the consent of the governed through its ability to manage collective security as well as political, economic, and social development. Popular support leads to the stability required to manage internal problems, change, and conflict. On the other hand, misguided, corrupt, and incompetent governance fosters instability and could lead to conditions that threaten global security, and particularly the security of the United States and its interests overseas. Without legitimacy, military action can only deal with the symptoms of instability. Restoring legitimacy within a weak or failed state requires the coordinated efforts of all elements of national power.¹¹

An Emerging Strategy

To address this emerging strategic problem, the current U.S. National Security Strategy (NSS) aims to delegitimize terrorism as a tactic for non-state actors and to influence nation-states to control terrorists within their borders.¹² To accomplish this as part of a broader national effort, the 2008 National Defense Strategy (NDS) emphasizes a collaborative, interagency and

¹⁰ United States Government, National Commission on Terrorist Attacks upon the United States. *The 9/11 Commission Report*. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office, 24 April 2007, p. 380. Available at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/pdf/fullreport.pdf>. Secretary Gates also predicts that “The most likely catastrophic threats to the U.S. homeland – for example, that of a U.S. city being poisoned or reduced to rubble by a terrorist attack – are more likely to emanate from failing states than from aggressor states.” See “A Balanced Strategy,” p. 30.

¹¹ Eliot Cohen, Conrad Crane, Jan Horvath, and John Nagl, “Principles, Imperatives, and Paradoxes of Counterinsurgency,” *Military Review*, March-April 2006, p. 49.

¹² Michael J. Boyle, “The War on Terror in American Grand Strategy,” *International Affairs* 84:2, 2008, p. 199. See also the 2002 NSS, p. 6, and the 2006 NSS, pp. 11-12.

international approach aimed at building the internal capacities of at-risk countries in order to shrink ungoverned areas and deny sanctuary to extremist groups.¹³ In order to implement this strategy, Secretary Gates seeks to create a “balanced” military force that is more adept in an irregular environment by “institutionalizing capabilities such as counterinsurgency and foreign military assistance [while] maintaining the United States’ existing conventional and strategic technological edge against other military forces.”¹⁴ However, military power alone is not sufficient to reestablish and maintain the type of order in failed or defeated states necessary to advance U.S. interests and values. To accomplish the aims of the NSS and NDS, balance is also required between the military and the other elements of national power. Achieving this balance presents the greater challenge.

Stability operations¹⁵ are inherently an interagency endeavor requiring the coordination of all elements of statecraft in order to achieve a sustainable peace in the aftermath of conflict. Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations are a subset of stability operations and are conducted to assist a state or region that is under severe stress or has collapsed due to a crisis or conflict resulting from natural or man-made causes.¹⁶ The George W. Bush Administration’s National Security Presidential Directive (NSPD) 44, *Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization* (dated 7 DEC 2005), delegates authority to the Secretary of State to “coordinate and lead integrated United States Government

¹³ Department of Defense, *The National Defense Strategy of the United States of America*, June 2008, p. 9.

¹⁴ Gates, p. 28.

¹⁵ Defined as “Military and civilian activities conducted across the spectrum from peace to conflict to establish or maintain order in states and regions.” See Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations*, November 28, 2005, p. 2.

¹⁶ Department of Defense, *Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations Joint Operating Concept, Version 2.0*, December 2006, p. 2. Hereafter cited as SSTRO JOC.

efforts, involving all U.S. Departments and Agencies with relevant capabilities to prepare, plan for, and conduct stabilization and reconstruction activities.”¹⁷ However, the United States Government’s (USG) civilian agencies do not possess an adequate expeditionary capacity to conduct sustained, comprehensive stability operations. According to Michele Flournoy, the Undersecretary of Defense for Policy, whose job it is to develop stability operations policy options for the Secretary of Defense, “We simply haven’t invested in what we need to be effective.” She acknowledges that “this is not a new lesson,” but rather is one that is “discover[ed] and rediscover[ed]...every time we go into an operation....”¹⁸ Moreover, a declining security environment in the afflicted state or region may prevent an otherwise available civilian capability from gaining access to the affected population.

To address this critical capacity gap, Department of Defense Directive 3000.05, *Military Support for Stability, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction (SSTR) Operations* (dated 28 NOV 2005), directs the military to adopt stability operations as a “core U.S. military mission” to be “given priority comparable to combat operations....”¹⁹ By institutionalizing “nation-building”²⁰ competencies in areas such as governance, economics, and the rule of law, this directive supports Secretary Gates’ vision of a more balanced force with the capabilities needed to “win today’s wars and some of their likely successors.”²¹ It also recognizes that while “many stability

¹⁷ National Security Presidential Directive. *NSPD 44: Management of Interagency Efforts Concerning Reconstruction and Stabilization*. December 7, 2005. NSPD 44, p. 2.

¹⁸ Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS), “Rebalancing the Force: Major Issues for QDR 2010,” 29 APR 09, available at http://policy.defense.gov/sections/public_statements/speeches/usdp/flournoy/2009/April_27_2009.pdf

¹⁹ DODD 3000.05. p. 2.

²⁰ RAND defines nation-building as “The use of armed force as part of a broader effort to promote political and economic reforms with the objective of transforming a society emerging from conflict into one at peace with itself and its neighbors.” See James Dobbins, *et al*, “Beginner’s Guide to Nation Building,” Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2007, p. xvii.

²¹ Gates, p. 29.

operation tasks are best performed by indigenous, foreign, or U.S. civilian professionals..., U.S. military forces shall be prepared to perform all tasks necessary to establish or maintain order when civilians cannot do so.”²²

Defining the Problem: Civil-Military Separation

The challenge of integrating military and non-military means into a single, coherent stability strategy starts with the separation of authorities and responsibilities created between the Departments of State and Defense by NSPD 44 and DODD 3000.05, respectively. NSPD 44 establishes civilian authority for conducting and coordinating SSTR operations within a State Department that lacks capacity, while DoDD 3000.05 institutionalizes the capacity for performing nation-building tasks within a Defense Department that has by necessity assumed non-traditional responsibilities but lacks the requisite authority. This divide between civilian authority and military responsibility extends from Washington, D.C. to the theater of action and inhibits the coherency of the stability effort. In the absence of deployable civilian capabilities, the military must assume responsibility for replicating agency activities in the field. However, absent a presidential directive, the operations of agencies representing the non-military instruments of power do not fall under military command. In a foreign country, the U.S. ambassador is responsible to the President for directing, coordinating, and supervising all USG elements, except those under military command.²³

The favored USG approach to improving unity of effort during the conduct of stability operations, also referred to as Complex Contingency Operations, was developed from lessons learned from the primarily humanitarian interventions in the 1990s, such as Somalia (1992), Haiti

²² DoDD 3000.05, p. 2.

²³ Joint Staff, U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1, Doctrine for the Armed Forces of the United States, 14 May 2007, p. II-2.

(1994), and the Balkans (1995).²⁴ This approach establishes parallel civilian and military chains of command within an Interagency Task Force. Under this model, the task force would be jointly led by a presidentially appointed civilian Special Representative, who may also be the U.S. Ambassador to a given country, and the military JFC. The Special Representative is responsible for achieving the intervention's strategic objectives and is accountable for the overall success of the campaign. The Special Representative or Ambassador reports to the President through the Secretary of State and has direct authority over all U.S. government civilians deployed to the field. The JFC reports to the Combatant Commander in charge of the operation and retains operational control of all U.S. military forces in the theater, leaving the customary military chain of command unbroken. Any disagreements between the two leaders needs to be raised to the National Security Council, and ultimately the President, for resolution.²⁵

At the heart of the problem is a fundamental conflict between the design of USG command and control structures and the demands of irregular warfare. Success in an irregular environment requires that one leader be given the authority to direct the activities of all elements of national power in a single coherent strategy to achieve national security objectives. Maintaining a bifurcated line of authority in a contested environment without the means to adjudicate civil-military disagreements inhibits a whole-of government approach and is dysfunctional. Given the tenuous security environment characteristic of irregular warfare plus a lack of ready civilian expeditionary capacity, the JFC must initially take the lead until security, civilian capacity, and political conditions permit transition back to legitimate civilian leadership.

²⁴ Clark A. Murdock and Michele A. Flournoy, "Beyond Goldwater-Nichols: U.S. Government and Defense Reform for a New Strategic Era," Center for Strategic and International Studies, July 2005, pp. 44-45.

²⁵ Murdock and Flournoy, p. 48.

Chapter 2: Theory and Doctrine

Fighting “Grand Strategically”

Clausewitz describes war as “a continuation of political intercourse, with the addition of other means.”²⁶ A government’s policy will determine the means that are afforded to a military commander in order to achieve the war’s objectives. Therefore, “If war is a part of policy, policy will determine its character,” meaning the way in which the war will be waged.²⁷ But regular and irregular war have distinctly different qualities which call for the application of different means in different measures, so the strategy a nation employs must also be considered in light of the character of the conflict.

Conventional, or regular warfare may be defined as “a form of warfare between states that employs direct military confrontation to defeat an adversary’s armed forces, destroy an adversary’s war-making capacity, or seize or retain territory in order to force a change in an adversary’s government or policies.”²⁸ Once combat is initiated, military power is the principle instrument used to achieve policy goals, with diplomatic, economic, and informational means playing supporting roles until the fighting ends. Warfare conducted in this context makes it relatively easy for political leaders to allocate tasks and responsibilities “among the government, which directs operations, the population, which provides the tools, and the soldier, who utilizes them.”²⁹ In contrast, unconventional, or irregular warfare does not focus on controlling an adversary’s armed forces or terrain, but rather seeks to control or influence a population. As

²⁶ Carl von Clausewitz, *On War*, Ed. and Trans. by Michael Howard and Peter Paret, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, p. 605.

²⁷ Ibid, p. 606.

²⁸ IW JOC, pp. 7-8.

²⁹ David Galula, *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*, Westport, Connecticut: Praeger Security International, 2006, pp. 4-5.

such, it is inherently a political struggle in which parties to the conflict, either states or armed groups, attempt to undermine their adversary's legitimacy and credibility in the eyes of the populace while enhancing their own legitimacy and credibility to exercise authority over that same population.³⁰ While military power plays an important role in irregular warfare, it is not the primary means – nor the most apt – to secure the allegiance of a relevant population. And unlike conventional warfare, political and military actions cannot be neatly separated; military actions must be weighed against their potential political effects and vice-versa.³¹

Regular warfare lends itself to being fought “strategically.” Clausewitz’ definition of strategy as “the use of engagements for the object of war” is descriptive of a conventional conflict in which the military is the primary means used to achieve national objectives.³² However, this interpretation is not readily applied to the arena of irregular conflict. In his book *Strategy*, British military historian and inter-war theorist Sir Basil Henry Liddell Hart noted that Clausewitz’ definition, viewed narrowly, conveyed the idea that battle was the only means used to achieve strategic ends.³³ For his purposes, Liddell Hart correlated the Clausewitz definition to “military strategy” – concerned with the problem of military victory – in order to contrast it with “grand strategy” – concerned with the quality of the peace that follows.³⁴ Liddell Hart explained the relationship between strategy and grand strategy as follows:

³⁰ IW JOC, pp. 8-9.

³¹ Cohen, Crane, Horvath, and Nagle, p. 50.

³² Ibid, p. 128.

³³ B.H. Liddell Hart, *Strategy*, London, England: Faber and Faber LTD, 1967, p. 319.

³⁴ Ibid, p. 349-350.

As tactics is an application of strategy on a lower plane, so strategy is an application on a lower plane of 'grand strategy'. While practically synonymous with the policy which guides the conduct of the war, as distinct from the more fundamental policy which should govern its object, the term 'grand strategy' serves to bring out the sense of 'policy in execution.' For the role of grand strategy – higher strategy – is to coordinate and direct all the resources of a nation, or band of nations, towards the attainment of the political object of the war – the goal defined by fundamental policy.³⁵

He then continues:

Moreover, fighting power is but one of the instruments of grand strategy – which should take account of and apply the power of financial pressure, of diplomatic pressure, of commercial pressure, and, not least of ethical pressure, to weaken the opponent's will.³⁶

Finally, he concludes:

Furthermore, while the horizon of strategy is bounded by the war, grand strategy looks beyond the war to the subsequent peace. It should not only combine the various instruments, but so regulate their use as to avoid damage to the future state of peace – for its security and prosperity.³⁷

Liddell Hart most certainly viewed grand strategy in the context of conventional war. He did not advocate that the military leader direct grand strategy, only that he clearly understand his predominant role in achieving its ends.

In his book *Modern Strategy*, British author and strategic theorist Colin Gray adapts a broader view of Clausewitz' definition. His initial revision that strategy is "the use that is made of force and the threat of force for the ends of policy"³⁸ is a slight adaptation of the original. He agrees with Liddell Hart that Clausewitz' definition appears limited at first glance; however, it is illuminating if one reconsiders what is encompassed by the idea of "engagements." Viewed in this light, Gray proposes that "the strategy at issue may not be military strategy; instead it may be

³⁵ Ibid, pp. 321-322.

³⁶ Ibid, p. 322.

³⁷ Ibid, p. 322.

³⁸ Colin S. Gray, *Modern Strategy*, NY: Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 17.

grand strategy that uses ‘engagements’, meaning all of the relevant instruments of power as threat or in action, for the objectives of statecraft.”³⁹

In conventional warfare, the distinct role played by military power against an adversary’s armed forces is readily apparent. However, in a stability or counterinsurgency environment where the focus of operations is the host-nation population, the roles of military and non-military instruments are blurred together and cannot be neatly divided between soldier and civilian. In his monograph “Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?” Gray argues that irregular warfare is waged on both sides “grand strategically,” with all instruments of persuasion, coercion, and influence employed. He explains, “The conflict will be political, ideological, economic, diplomatic, and military in several modes.... To beat an insurgency..., the COIN forces must organize and direct a strict unity of civilian and military effort with a single chain of command, and with political authority unambiguously in supreme command.”⁴⁰

Unity of Leadership in an Irregular Environment

In this current era of persistent irregular conflict, the U.S. military will continue to be called upon to improve the stability of weak or failing states in support of national strategic objectives. As is the case in Afghanistan and Iraq, the military provides support to SSTR operations in order to “assist an existing or new host nation government in providing security, essential public services, economic development, and governance following the significant degradation or collapse of the government’s capabilities due to internal failure or as a consequence of the destruction and dislocation of a war.”⁴¹ If these nation-building activities are conducted in the

³⁹ Ibid, p. 17.

⁴⁰ Colin S. Gray, “Irregular Enemies and the Essence of Strategy: Can the American Way of War Adapt?” Carlisle, PA: Strategic Studies Institute, March 2006, pp. 23-24.

⁴¹ SSTRO JOC, p. 3

face of armed opposition, as is the case in Afghanistan and Iraq today, then the SSTR operation becomes a counterinsurgency (COIN) operation.⁴²

COIN operations require the effective coordination and integration of all elements of statecraft in order to promote the legitimacy of the host nation government in the eyes of the local inhabitants. Foremost among the challenges of operating grand strategically in a COIN environment is achieving unity of effort among all of the military and non-military capabilities employed. COIN theorist David Galula maintains that the effects of the various military, judicial, economic, and political tasks required to defeat an insurgency are not additive, but rather multiplicative. All are essential, and if the effect of one is zero then the product of the entire endeavor will be zero.⁴³ He writes that “more than any other kind of warfare, counterinsurgency must respect the principle of a single direction. A single boss must direct the operations from beginning until the end.”⁴⁴

Joint doctrine holds that unity of command is central to unity of effort. Unity of command means that all forces operate under a single commander with the requisite authority to direct all forces employed in pursuit of a common purpose.⁴⁵ Likewise, COIN doctrine states that (ideally) a single counterinsurgent leader should have authority over all government agencies involved in COIN operations, lest well-intentioned but uncoordinated actions cancel each other out or provide vulnerabilities for insurgents to exploit.⁴⁶ Joint doctrine further prescribes that unity of effort is enhanced through decentralized execution of centralized, overarching plans.⁴⁷ JFCs use mission-

⁴² Ibid, p. 22. The SSTRO JOC also classifies COIN operations as “high-end” SSTR operations.

⁴³ Galula, p. 61.

⁴⁴ Ibid, p. 61.

⁴⁵ Joint Publication 1, p. IV-1.

⁴⁶ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *FM 3-24, Counterinsurgency*, December 2006, p. 1-22.

⁴⁷ Joint Publication 1, p. IV-15.

type orders – orders that direct subordinates to perform a mission without specifying how it is to be accomplished – in order to decentralize execution.⁴⁸ Under mission command, higher commanders provide subordinates with adequate resources to accomplish assigned missions and empower subordinates to make decisions pertaining to the details of execution. Such initiative is imperative in a COIN environment, where local commanders will have the best understanding of what needs to be accomplished in their respective areas of operation based on existing conditions. Therefore, effective COIN operations are decentralized, and higher commanders must allocate the appropriate capabilities from across all elements of national power to their subordinates and empower them to coordinate their activities in accordance with the specific needs of the local population.⁴⁹

In a high-end stability environment such as COIN, civilian tasks are best performed by civilian agencies with the greatest applicable expertise. However, as Army Field Manual 3-24, *Counterinsurgency*, notes, “the ability of such agencies to deploy to foreign countries in sustainable numbers and with ready access to necessary resources is usually limited.”⁵⁰ Additionally, the more violent the post-conflict environment, the more difficult it is for civilians to operate effectively. Therefore, military forces often possess the only readily available counterinsurgency and nation building capabilities required to meet the fundamental needs of the local populace.⁵¹

David Galula recognizes that however capable the civil administration of an intervening nation may be in peacetime, it is never prepared for the personnel requirements of a

⁴⁸ Joint Staff, U.S. Department of Defense, Joint Publication 1-02, Department of Defense Dictionary of Military and Associated Terms, 12 April 2001 (As Amended Through 31 October 2009), p. 351. See also Joint Publication 1, p. IV-16.

⁴⁹ FM 3-24, p. 1-26.

⁵⁰ Ibid, p. 2-9.

⁵¹ Ibid, p. 2-9.

counterinsurgency operation. The number of civilian experts needed to perform the various tasks associated with winning the broad support of the population, when multiplied across villages, districts, and provinces, is staggering. He concedes that, in the immediacy of combat, only the armed forces can match the numbers required and so must assume these roles. “To confine soldiers to purely military functions while urgent and vital tasks have to be done, and nobody else is available to undertake them, would be senseless.” But he adds that this should be the case “only for as long as [the soldiers] cannot be replaced, for it is better to entrust civilian tasks to civilians.”⁵²

Preference for civilian expertise notwithstanding, COIN expert John Nagl points out that “the necessary civilian tools to deal with failed and failing states do not currently exist in sufficient supply and are unlikely to be developed in the foreseeable future due to inadequate resourcing of the non-military instruments of power.”⁵³ Despite calls by the Secretary of Defense for “a dramatic increase in spending on the civilian instruments of national security,” current funding remains woefully inadequate.⁵⁴ In addition, Nagl argues that the bureaucratic cultures of civilian elements of power do not encourage nontraditional field service in active conflict zones. “An endemic lack of appropriate career incentives and institutional resistance to changing personnel policies designed for peacetime conditions hurt efforts to bring in civilian expertise from federal departments that do not focus on international affairs.”⁵⁵ These conditions will not sufficiently change in the near-term to improve the existing civilian capacity gap; therefore, the

⁵² Galula, p. 62.

⁵³ John Nagl. “Dirty Windows and Burning Houses.” *The Washington Quarterly*, April 2009, p. 93.

⁵⁴ See Nagl, p. 94, and Robert M. Gates, “Beyond Guns and Steel: Reviving the Nonmilitary Instruments of American Power,” *Military Review*, January-February 2008, p. 8.

⁵⁵ Nagl, p. 94.

U.S. military currently provides the only credible capability to shape irregular warfare for the indefinite future.⁵⁶

FM 3-24 states that a single leader should exercise formal command and control over all USG organizations engaged in a COIN mission.⁵⁷ But should this leader be civilian or military? Galula invokes the maxim that “a revolutionary war is 20 percent military action and 80 percent political.”⁵⁸ Even if military operations are required to establish a secure environment, the overall effort must be directed towards the political goal. He argues that giving the soldier authority over the civilian would contradict a major characteristic of this type of war and tend to reverse the relative importance of military action versus political action. The most dangerous result would be to shift the proper character of an irregular (political) war closer to that of a conventional (attritional) one.⁵⁹ Thus, Galula is adamant that the leader should be a civilian. However, in situations where military intervention results in regime change and the temporary military occupation of a host nation, the JFC is required by international law to restore and ensure public order and safety.⁶⁰ To that end, he may be directed to establish an interim military government until a new civilian government can be formed.⁶¹ Given a contested security environment and a significant civil-military capacity gap, an initial military lead is likely. In either case, the essence of the problem is not civilian versus military leadership, but rather unity of leadership.

⁵⁶ Ibid, p. 94

⁵⁷ FM 3-24, p. 2-2.

⁵⁸ Galula, p. 63.

⁵⁹ Ibid, p. 63.

⁶⁰ Headquarters, Department of the Army, *FM 27-10, The Law of Land Warfare (with Change 1)*, 15 July 1976, p. 151.

⁶¹ Joint Staff, U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 3-57: Joint Doctrine for Civil-Military Operations*, 8 February 2001, p. I-19.

Current USG command and control structures that separate military and civilian authorities cannot be neatly applied to an irregular environment where military and civilian tasks are difficult or impossible to separate. Like strategic theory, both COIN theory and doctrine agree that a single empowered leader is required to effectively coordinate military and civilian activities. While a civilian should ultimately lead in such a politically sensitive environment, circumstances concerning security and civilian capacity will likely dictate that the JFC coordinate the initial USG effort. Current joint doctrine can accommodate a model of initial military empowerment and subsequent transition to civilian leadership. Establishing this single line of authority allows the USG to approach irregular warfare in a “grand strategic” manner.

Joint Doctrine in an Irregular Context

Joint doctrine implies that the planning of joint operations be conducted in a grand strategic manner. Not only does it address winning the war, but it also acknowledges the importance of setting the conditions to secure the peace. For a specific situation that requires the employment of military capabilities to resolve, the President and Secretary of Defense will establish a set of national strategic objectives. Achieving these objectives results in attaining the national strategic endstate, which is a “broadly expressed [set of] conditions that should exist at the end of a campaign or operation.”⁶² National strategic objectives are not independent of each other and cannot be neatly divided among government agencies to accomplish separately. Some will be the primary responsibility of the military commander to achieve, while others will require a more balanced use of all instruments of national power with the military commander in a supporting role. Further, this support may be required before, during, or after engaging in any necessary large-scale combat. Thus the military commander must consider the entire range of strategic

⁶² Joint Staff, U.S. Department of Defense, *Joint Publication 5-0, Joint Operation Planning*, 26 December 2006, p. III-5.

objectives, and the role that military power will play in accomplishing each one, before formulating proposed termination criteria – “the specific standards, approved by the President or Secretary of Defense, that must be met before a joint operation can be concluded.”⁶³ Closely related, but distinctly different, is the military endstate within a joint operation. This endstate complements and supports attaining the specified termination criteria and the objectives associated with the other instruments of national power. It defines the conditions required to achieve all military objectives and “represents a point in time and/or circumstances beyond which the President does not require the military instrument of national power as the primary means to achieve remaining national objectives.”⁶⁴

In her essay “Nation-Building: Lessons Learned and Unlearned,” Michele Flournoy states: “Most experts would agree that once major combat operations have ceased, leadership should pass from the senior military commander in the theater to a senior civilian representative on the ground, be it...a U.S. ambassador or special representative of the President....”⁶⁵ However, given a potentially uncertain security environment and the existing USG civilian capacity gap, military forces must by necessity assume responsibility for tasks normally performed by civilian agencies. This implies that the point in time beyond which the military is not required to achieve other national objectives lies well past the accomplishment of strictly military objectives. This further implies a substantial role for the military commander beyond the conclusion of major combat operations and into post-conflict SSTR operations. The resulting additional “de facto” responsibilities argue in favor of empowering the military commander with authority over non-

⁶³ Ibid, p. III-5.

⁶⁴ Ibid, p. III-8.

⁶⁵ Michele A. Flournoy, “Nation-Building: Lessons Learned and Unlearned,” in *Nation-Building: Beyond Afghanistan and Iraq*, ed. Francis Fukuyama (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2006), p. 90.

military activities in order to maintain unity of effort in achieving national objectives until appropriate and sufficient civilian capabilities can be employed. Finally, empowering the military commander in this way suggests a transition point between military and civilian leadership at some point beyond the accomplishment of military objectives. This further suggests the need for a formal relationship between military and civilian organizations.

Interagency Command and Control

The relationships and authorities between military and non-military agencies are usually specified in a memorandum of agreement or understanding (MOA/U) that directs an agency to support a particular operation. This type of document may form the basis for establishing a formal relationship between military commanders and agency chiefs similar to the support command relationship that is used to achieve unity of command and unity of effort among military services during the conduct of joint operations.⁶⁶

As described in joint doctrine, support is a command authority that conveys priorities among the various commands involved in planning or conducting joint operations. It is, by design, a somewhat vague but very flexible arrangement under which the establishing authority (the common superior commander) defines through written directive the purpose of the support relationship, the effect desired, and the scope of the action to be taken.⁶⁷ This establishing directive may also include:

- 1) The forces and resources allocated to the supporting effort(s);
- 2) The time, place, level, and duration of the supporting effort(s);
- 3) The relative priority of the supporting effort(s);

⁶⁶ FM 3-24, p. 2-3.

⁶⁷ Joint Publication 1, p. IV-10.

4) The authority, if any, of the supporting commander to modify the supporting effort(s) in the event of exceptional opportunity or an emergency;⁶⁸ and

5) The degree of authority granted to the supported commander over the supporting effort(s).

Thus, unless limited by the establishing directive, the supported commander is empowered with the command authority to direct and coordinate the activities of each supporting effort.⁶⁹

An interagency support command relationship similar to the joint model, with USG field coordinators vested with the appropriate authorities necessary to make decisions on behalf of their parent agencies, departments, or organizations, would allow a single leader to effectively coordinate all national activities in a given theater of action. DoD's Military Support to Stabilization, Security, Transition, and Reconstruction Operations Joint Operating Concept describes a plausible framework within which to consider a case for initial military leader empowerment and subsequent transition to civilian leadership in a post-conflict, SSTR environment.

Emerging Doctrine: A Concept for Transition

The primary focus of U.S. policy during SSTR operations is to assist a severely stressed host nation government to avoid failure due to internal conflict or natural disaster, or to “[assist] an emerging host nation government...build a ‘new domestic order’ following internal collapse or defeat in war.”⁷⁰ When conducting SSTR operations at the “high end” of the spectrum, the most

⁶⁸ According to Joint Publication 3-08, *Interagency, Intergovernmental Organization, and Nongovernmental Organization Coordination During Joint Operations, Volume I*, p. I-6, “Decisionmaking at the lowest levels is frequently thwarted because field coordinators may not be vested with the authority to speak for parent agencies, departments, or organizations.”

⁶⁹ Joint Publication 1, p. IV-10.

⁷⁰ SSTRO JOC, p. 19.

important factor in achieving success is to convince the local population to recognize the legitimacy of the new government and to actively support that government's efforts.⁷¹

U.S. military efforts will assist in building this “new domestic order”⁷² by facilitating the effective combination of military, civilian, and host nation capabilities toward achieving desired endstates within six “major mission elements” (MMEs):

1. Establish and maintain a safe, secure environment;
2. Deliver humanitarian assistance;
3. Reconstruct critical infrastructure and restore essential services;
4. Support economic development;
5. Establish representative, effective governance and rule of law; and
6. Conduct strategic communication.

These MMEs, or logical lines of operation, are executed concurrently and are integrated and tailored to the specific situation.⁷³ In a contested security environment, the military will lead the USG effort across all lines of operation. As conditions become more permissive, these efforts will be transitioned to appropriate civilian organizations.⁷⁴

Following major combat operations in which external military forces expel an adversarial regime and occupy its territory, international law dictates that the occupying power establish a temporary “military government” through which executive, legislative, and judicial authority is

⁷¹ Ibid, p. 22.

⁷² A new domestic order implies significant differences in organization and process within the security, economic, and political systems of the host nation than existed prior to military intervention. See SSTRO JOC, p. 19.

⁷³ SSTRO JOC, p. 20.

⁷⁴ The term transition “describes the process of shifting lead responsibility and authority for helping provide or foster security, essential services, humanitarian assistance, economic development, and political governance from the intervening military and civilian agencies to the host nation.” See SSTRO JOC, pp. 2-3.

exercised throughout the occupied territory.⁷⁵ This occupation government may be composed of military or civilian officials, or a combination of the two as determined by the President. Normally, this temporary government will be a civilian-led administration. However, the military, as the occupying force, will initially take the lead in activities across all MMEs in order to maintain law and order, reconstitute essential public services, and to ensure that the civilian population receives adequate food, water, shelter, and medical treatment.⁷⁶ Thus, in a “high end” SSTRO scenario, there will be two leadership transitions: The first occurs between external military forces and external civilian agencies, and the second occurs between the external civilian agencies and the new host nation government. These transitions are event driven and do not occur simultaneously across all MMEs. Furthermore, transitions within each MME may occur at different times in different regions of the host nation and are based on local conditions, such as the security environment and the capability and capacity of civilian agencies and the host nation to carry out the activities needed to accomplish the mission.⁷⁷

In order to facilitate the transition from external military to external civilian agency lead, the military must first achieve a sustainable level of security that allows the general population to routinely go about its business.⁷⁸ A safe and secure environment enables civilian-led external assistance and host nation reconstruction activities – the process of “rebuilding degraded, damaged, or destroyed political, socio-economic, and physical infrastructure...to create the

⁷⁵ Chapter I of Joint Publication 3-57 prescribes that international law affords military commanders the authority to establish civil administrations and to control or conduct governmental matters both during and after hostilities. A commander’s authority for undertaking such civil-military operations is ultimately derived from the President. A civil administration by an occupying power is also called a military government, as the territory under administration is effectively under military control.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p. 45.

⁷⁷ SSTRO JOC, pp. 29-30.

⁷⁸ Ibid, p. 33.

foundation for longer-term development.”⁷⁹ These activities, in turn, enhance the security environment by addressing root causes of the conflict. However, a hostile or contested environment can inhibit civilian freedom of movement and delay transition to civilian agency lead. Likewise, a lack of civilian agency capacity can also interrupt progress toward reconstruction and leave the military as the temporary stewards of nation building activities.

The transitions specified in the SSTRO JOC imply a preference for a lead authority, either military or civilian in turn, based upon the conditions on the ground and influenced by policy. This model suggests empowering a single individual with authority over the mechanisms of statecraft required to coordinate a coherent grand strategy for nation-building in a hostile environment. History reveals that the idea of initial military empowerment and subsequent transition to civilian authority in an unsecure, post-conflict environment is not a new one. America’s involvement in the Philippine War from 1898 to 1902 illustrates such a model.

⁷⁹ Ibid, p. 3.

Chapter 3: A Historical Perspective

More than one hundred years ago, the United States found itself involved in a series of irregular conflicts following its victory over Spain in the Spanish-American War. Of these, the Philippine War bears many similarities to the conflicts in which the U.S. military and other governmental agencies are presently involved. In the Philippines, the United States unilaterally expelled an adversarial Spanish regime by military force and occupied the conquered territory. Fought conventionally in its early stages, the war transformed into an irregular struggle against Filipino nationalists in the face of America's overwhelming conventional dominance. Politically, the war was extremely unpopular with waning domestic support effectively targeted by a remarkably organized insurgent movement. It was America's first overseas nation-building experience and would today be classified as a "high-end" SSTR operation. Significantly, it is also an example of a successful American counterinsurgency campaign.⁸⁰

Policy and Empowerment

On 1 May 1898, Admiral George Dewey defeated the Spanish Fleet in the naval Battle of Manila Bay. With Spanish troops still occupying the city's defenses, Admiral Dewey requested a ground force to defeat the Spanish garrison and assume responsibility for the city's inhabitants.⁸¹ Viewing Manila as a bargaining chip with Spain over Cuba, U.S. President William McKinley agreed that a military expedition was required "for the twofold purpose of completing the reduction of Spanish power...and of giving order and security to the islands while in possession

⁸⁰ Timothy K. Deady, "Lessons from a Successful Counterinsurgency: The Philippines, 1899-1902," *Parameters*, Spring 2005, p. 53.

⁸¹ Brian McAllister Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War, 1899-1902*, Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1989, p. 1.

of the United States.”⁸² President McKinley designated Major General Wesley Merritt to lead this expedition and directed on 19 May that “The first effect of the military occupation of the enemy’s territory is the severance of the former political relations of the inhabitants and the establishment of a new political power.” While the military occupation was to be “as free from severity as possible,” Merritt’s authority as military governor was to be “absolute and supreme and immediately operate upon the political condition of the inhabitants.” He was to follow local laws and procedures “so far as they are compatible with the new order of things,” with civic officials who accepted American authority being allowed to remain in office. Merritt would also have the power to levy taxes, seize private property for military purposes, and to control the ports. Thus did McKinley’s instructions display his intent to exercise U.S. sovereignty in the Philippines through the military.⁸³

From Regular to Irregular Warfare

Even before the arrival of Merritt’s forces, Filipino nationalists under the leadership of Emilio Aguinaldo had viewed Admiral Dewey’s naval victory as an opportunity to secure national independence after more than 300 years of Spanish colonial rule. Aguinaldo and his forces had been fighting a guerrilla war against Spanish forces since mid-1897, and the tempo of their resistance now increased in anticipation of American support. With much of their manpower besieged by the Filipinos in Manila, Spanish garrisons in the provinces were isolated and soon began to surrender. Aguinaldo declared dictatorial powers throughout the Philippines on 24 May, proclaimed Philippine independence on 12 June, and assumed the presidency of a revolutionary government on 24 June. By the fall of 1898, military power in much of the islands

⁸² William McKinley to the Secretary of War, 19 May 1898, U.S. Army, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain*, 2:676, quoted in Linn, p. 2.

⁸³ U.S. Army, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain*, 2:676-677, as quoted in Linn, p. 2.

was in the hands of regional Filipino forces that generally recognized Aguinaldo's claim to authority.⁸⁴

When Merritt landed on 26 July, he refused to recognize Aguinaldo's government and set out to capture Manila unilaterally. The ensuing Battle of Manila on 13 August left the Americans as the sole occupiers of the city, who now found themselves under siege by Filipino forces beginning to understand the divergence between American and Filipino intentions.⁸⁵ The Treaty of Paris formally transferred sovereignty of the Philippines to the United States on 10 December 1898. On 21 December, President McKinley ordered that the military government heretofore confined to the city of Manila "be extended with all possible dispatch to the whole of the ceded territory."⁸⁶ He stressed that the Army was to "win the confidence, respect, and affection of the inhabitants of the Philippines" and that the "mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation, substituting the mild sway of justice and right for arbitrary rule."⁸⁷ Together with the Treaty of Paris, these instructions clearly emphasized U.S. over Filipino sovereignty and greatly increased tensions between the two sides.⁸⁸ They also committed the Army to a nation-building campaign aimed at securing the cooperation and allegiance of the Filipino people.

On 4 February 1899, open hostilities broke out between Filipino nationalist and U.S. forces. U.S. Army forces, now under the command of Major General Elwell S. Otis, quickly exerted their conventional dominance and largely destroyed Aguinaldo's Republican Army by November 1899 while occupying much of the main island of Luzon. In response, Aguinaldo returned to the guerrilla tactics he had used so effectively against the Spanish. He hoped that a protracted war

⁸⁴ Linn, pp. 6-7.

⁸⁵ Linn, p. 8.

⁸⁶ U.S. Army, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain*, 2:858, as quoted in Linn, p. 9.

⁸⁷ U.S. Army, *Correspondence Relating to the War with Spain*, 2:859, as quoted in Linn, p. 9.

⁸⁸ Linn, pp. 10-11.

would exhaust the U.S. Army, foment American domestic discontent, and threaten McKinley's reelection. The resulting decentralization of armed resistance, as well as the isolated geography of the Philippine Islands themselves, caused the emerging insurgency to take on characteristics that differed by region and local culture. The Americans, in turn, spread out into hundreds of garrisons across the islands, many in remote locations that forced them to learn and adapt counterinsurgent tactics and techniques to the variety of unique situations they encountered.⁸⁹

A Strategy from the Bottom Up

Bounded by McKinley's policy of benevolent assimilation, MG Otis was required to develop a counterinsurgency strategy that not only defeated the guerrillas, but also prepared the Philippines for colonial government and the transition to civilian leadership. To this end, he emphasized the importance of municipal governance over military action as a means to win the favor and allegiance of the local population. Once local governance was established, the Army could begin to implement numerous other social reform projects such as schools, roads, clinics, markets, and courts, which would demonstrate the benefits of U.S. rule. MG Otis viewed his dual responsibilities of military commander and civil administrator as extending down from himself to the smallest detachment commanders, and he expected his subordinate commanders to implement these pacification programs in their areas.⁹⁰

In practice, however, geography significantly influenced the conduct of the irregular campaign. The Philippine Islands consist of more than 7,000 islands and cover an area of over 500,000 square miles. Its diverse population – approximately 7.4 million in 1900 – speaks dozens of languages. By the end of 1900, the U.S. Army was dispersed in over 600 garrisons

⁸⁹ Andrew J. Birtle, *U.S. Army Counterinsurgency and Contingency Operations Doctrine, 1860-1941*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Army Center of Military History, 2001, p. 112-113.

⁹⁰ Brian McAllister Linn, *The Philippine War, 1899-1902*, Lawrence, Kansas: University Press of Kansas, 2000, pp. 199-200.

throughout the archipelago's 74 provinces.⁹¹ The combination of great distances, poor communications, and local influences meant that the character and effectiveness of pacification methods was as varied as the regions in which they were implemented. Despite the specific instructions issued by MG Otis, many town governments were ad hoc creation of garrison commanders as they applied the approved template to the local conditions.⁹² Civil projects, too, were applied according to the needs of each community based on the local commander's assessment. These projects significantly improved quality of life and won the support of the inhabitants, especially in areas of little insurgent activity (34 of 74 provinces experienced no fighting at all).⁹³ But in other areas, such benevolent civic projects were not sufficient in themselves to assure public safety and cooperation in the face of intimidation from guerrillas who remained living in their midst.⁹⁴ Some officers questioned the restrictions placed upon them against implementing the more punitive measures of General Orders (G.O.) 100 to dissuade increasing guerrilla attacks.⁹⁵ However, MG Otis discounted the threat of an organized insurgency and, despite reports from the field of a deteriorating security environment, was optimistic that the end of armed resistance was at hand.⁹⁶

⁹¹ Deady, p. 55

⁹² Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 200.

⁹³ Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 185.

⁹⁴ Ibid, p. 213.

⁹⁵ General Orders (G.O.) 100, or "Instructions for the Government of Armies of the United States in the Field," were a set of Civil War era instructions, widely recognized in Europe, that placed strict limits on an occupying army. They "emphasized the occupier's obligation to restore order, protect property, and treat civilians with justice and humanity." In turn, the population must acknowledge the occupier's authority and show reciprocal restraint. Continued resistance through guerilla warfare was a crime and subject to immediate retaliation, including confiscation and destruction of property, imprisonment, and, under certain circumstances, summary execution. See Linn, *The Philippine War*, pp. 9 and 211.

⁹⁶ Ibid, p. 206.

A Plan for Transition

Perhaps influenced by MG Otis' confidence in the progress of the policies of benevolent assimilation, President McKinley appointed a civilian commission led by William Howard Taft whose task would be to transfer the government of the islands from military to civilian rule. Subordinated to the War Department, the commission would build upon the work already begun by the Army. The transition would occur over a period of time, with the commission assuming legislative authority by September 1900 while the military governor maintained executive authority. Thereafter, as the pacification process in each province was completed, executive authority for that province would be transferred to the commission.⁹⁷ Eventually, when all was at peace, the commission would replace the Office of the Military Governor and Taft would become the new governor.⁹⁸

Striking a Balance

On 5 May 1900, MG Otis relinquished command over the Army in the Philippines to MG Arthur MacArthur. MacArthur recognized that he had inherited an unbalanced pacification program with too little focus against a resurgent enemy. While the Army's benevolent policies achieved positive results early in the war, especially in areas not committed to the rebellion, guerrilla leaders became concerned that this "policy of attraction" would undermine the commitment of the population to the insurgent cause and so increased their activity.⁹⁹ MacArthur also predicted an increase in insurgent activity coincident with the approach of the U.S. presidential election in November. Yet only the humanitarian provisions of G.O. 100 remained in effect, in part to allow benevolent policies additional time to work but also to protect McKinley's

⁹⁷ John Morgan Gates, *Schoolbooks and Krag's*, Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, Inc., 1973, pp. 141-142.

⁹⁸ Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 216.

⁹⁹ Birtle, p. 123.

reelection bid from unfavorable press.¹⁰⁰ Faced with an increase in armed resistance, and without explicit approval from higher, field commanders began to impose punitive measures in their areas according to their own interpretations of G.O. 100 to punish those providing support to the insurgency and to protect the general population from threat. Of these, crop and property destruction proved particularly effective, as it not only deprived the guerrillas of food and shelter, but it also punished their supporters. By the fall of 1900, the official “policy of attraction” was already giving way to a more stern “policy of chastisement” at the local level.¹⁰¹

Following President McKinley’s successful reelection in November 1900, MG MacArthur moved to bring official policy in line with the more balanced counterinsurgency policies being developed by regional commanders. On 20 December 1900, he issued a proclamation that implemented those sections of G.O. 100 authorizing stern measures against both guerrillas and civilian insurgents. The policies of benevolent assimilation were still retained, but they were now secondary to punitive measures against those who continued to resist.¹⁰² Far from prescribing a specific approach to the entire campaign, MacArthur allowed subordinate commanders to adopt the combination of positive and negative incentives most effective in their areas. One negative incentive introduced by many was a technique known as concentration, whereby civilians were separated into towns or “protected zones,” allowing the Army to protect the population from intimidation on one hand, while preventing their aiding the insurgents on the other.¹⁰³ On the positive side, the Army enlisted many Filipinos into organizations such as municipal police, scout, and constabulary units to aid in pacification efforts. And after achieving the pacification of a province, the Americans quickly installed local civic leaders in place of military martial law as

¹⁰⁰ Birtle, p. 127.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, p. 220.

¹⁰² Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 214.

¹⁰³ Ibid, p. 215.

a means of offering some measure of political autonomy.¹⁰⁴ The 23 March 1901 capture of Aguinaldo hastened the collapse of the revolution that had begun with the renewed American offensive operations following McKinley's reelection.¹⁰⁵ Thereafter, the pace of pacification and the end of armed resistance quickened.

Transition of Authority

On 1 July 1901, MG MacArthur transferred his executive responsibilities as military governor to Taft and the command of military forces to MG Adna R. Chaffee. On 20 July, G.O. 179 transferred the control of 23 formerly hostile provinces from the Army to the commission. The Army retained the mission of organizing governments in areas still in rebellion and therefore still under military control. However, the officers conducting the civil administration of these provinces were still viewed to be performing their functions under the direction of the civil governor.¹⁰⁶ By the end of 1901, only two provinces – Batangas and Samar – were still under military control, although military officers continued to play key roles in civil administration throughout the islands on behalf of the governor. On 4 July 1902, President Roosevelt, who had succeeded McKinley after his assassination, declared the war over and thanked the Army for its role in pacifying the islands.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁴ Linn, *The U.S. Army and Counterinsurgency in the Philippine War*, p. 26.

¹⁰⁵ John Morgan Gates, p. 235.

¹⁰⁶ See Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 217, and Gates, p. 239.

¹⁰⁷ Linn, *The Philippine War*, p. 219.

Chapter 4: Contemporary Applications

Drawing and Applying Contemporary Conclusions

Many of the principles of modern Army counterinsurgency doctrine are evident in the tactics and techniques developed and employed in the Philippine War. Protecting the population, isolating and defeating the insurgents, creating legitimate governance, enabling economic development, and restoring essential services are all evident in the actions taken by the U.S. Army to pacify the Philippines. But it was the empowerment of local leaders that proved decisive in creating the secure environment necessary to accomplish USG objectives.

Both military and civilian officials gradually recognized that the onus for devising effective counter-guerilla measures fell squarely on the shoulders of U.S. small-unit commanders at the local level.¹⁰⁸ Dr. Conrad C. Crane, Director of the U.S. Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, PA observes,

In the Philippines, both military and civilian officials recognized that the best agent for local pacification was the military leader on the spot. Considerable decentralization was required for a situation where village attitudes and characteristics varied widely. Officers had great discretion and were not closely supervised, though they also had clear directives from higher headquarters providing guidelines.¹⁰⁹

President McKinley enabled such flexibility by vesting initial authority in his military commander to act simultaneously as military governor and to undertake a variety of activities aimed at pacifying the islands and preparing them for civil governance. This authority could then be delegated to subordinate commanders who operated within general guidelines to accomplish a range of objectives, military and nonmilitary. Only upon achieving a suitable level of security

¹⁰⁸ Lawrence A. Yates, *The US Military's Experience in Stability Operations, 1789-2005*, Fort Leavenworth, KS: Combat Studies Institute Press, 2006, p. 8.

¹⁰⁹ Conrad C. Crane, "Phase IV Operations: Where Wars are Really Won," in *Turning Victory into Success: Military Operations After the Campaign*, ed. Dr. Lieutenant Colonel Brian M. De Toy (Fort Leavenworth, Kansas: Combat Studies Institute Press, September 2004), p. 9.

and public cooperation in a specific district or province was governing authority transferred from the military governor into the hands of American civil administrators.¹¹⁰

Although provided with clear guidelines within which to operate by both MGs Otis and MacArthur – structures and procedures for establishing local governments, benevolent methods of operations, etc. – subordinate commanders often modified official guidance without explicit approval to do so. Not only did difficult terrain isolate them from direct communication with higher headquarters, but the local circumstances each encountered were not necessarily as anticipated. For example, some commanders permitted local elections in their areas as prescribed by higher. In other areas where insurgent intimidation prevented local candidates from stepping forward, the local commander either appointed Filipino leaders or retained authority to himself.¹¹¹ Likewise, some local commanders determined that benevolent practices alone were inadequate to secure the cooperation of the population in their areas. The addition of chastisement practices such as arrests, property confiscation, and population concentration – not condoned officially until later authorized by MG MacArthur – were required to finally separate the guerrillas from their base of support.¹¹² No two pacification campaigns were exactly alike, with positive and negative measures tailored by local commanders to the unique circumstances encountered in each province. The freedom provided to local commanders to apply not just military power but also diplomatic, economic, and informational tools as called for by the situation at hand proved decisive in quelling the Philippine Insurrection.

¹¹⁰ Yates, p. 9.

¹¹¹ Deady, p. 62.

¹¹² Ibid, p. 66.

Empowering the Commander in the Field

A recent RAND report affirms the importance of empowering the commander in the field in light of recent experience in Afghanistan and Iraq. In their 2008 study, “Integrating Instruments of Power and Influence – Lessons Learned and Best Practices,” the authors contend that “As requirements for assistance with governance,...reconstruction, stabilization, and development increase, the requirement also increases for cooperation across institutional boundaries.”¹¹³ This cooperation among government agencies, they argue, is even more important at the theater or field level than at higher levels of government. “In a combat zone, there needs to be the closest collaboration regarding the conduct of military operations, the provision of security for noncombat (and especially civilian) activities, the role that civilian activities play in both facilitating military success and the success of the overall mission, and the way in which all tasks are melded.”¹¹⁴ To enable such close cooperation, the report asserts that “Local commanders (military and civilian) are usually best able to assess local needs and opportunities, as well as practical issues regarding military and nonmilitary activities. Emphasis on tactical flexibility and on devolving authority and responsibility to low levels should apply to both military operations and nonmilitary activities and personnel.”¹¹⁵ Particularly on the civilian side, agencies in the field should not be required “to refer to higher levels in-theater or to Washington for permission to take actions that either need to be decided upon rapidly or where local expertise should trump that at the parent level.”¹¹⁶

¹¹³ Robert E. Hunter, Edward Gnehm, and George Joulwan, “Integrating Instruments of Power and Influence – Lessons Learned and Best Practices,” Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2008, p. xi.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p. xii.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, p. xiii.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p. xii.

But such empowerment is not possible without establishing a clear line of authority, a single chain of command that eliminates contradictory guidance and facilitates unity of effort. Current laws mandating a dual civil and military chain of command at the country level do not guarantee a good working relationship and close collaboration between JFC and ambassador. In an October 2009 *Strategic Forum* article, authors Christopher Lamb and Martin Cinnamond, research fellows at the Institute for National Strategic Studies in Washington, D.C., assert that great ambassador-military commander teams are the exception and not the rule. While some manage to establish excellent rapport – Ambassador Khalilzad and LTG Barno in Afghanistan (2004) and Ambassador Crocker and GEN Petraeus in Iraq (2007) are two recent examples - this still does not guarantee cooperation down through subordinate organizational levels.¹¹⁷ A recent House Armed Services Committee (HASC) report investigating interagency cooperation in Iraq and Afghanistan remarked: “The nation’s security should not have to rely on having compatible personalities to successfully carry out the mission. While senior leaders should get along in the interest of the mission, history is replete with examples where they have not. Rather than depending exclusively on personalities for success, the right interagency structures and processes need to be in place and working.”¹¹⁸ Without President McKinley’s clarification of military vs. civilian lead, it is doubtful that MacArthur and Taft could have cooperated as equal authorities with competing mandates.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁷ Christopher J. Lamb and Martin Cinnamond, “Unity of Effort: Key to Success in Afghanistan,” *Strategic Forum*, No. 248, October 2008, p. 9. See also their article “Unified Effort: Key to Special Operations and Irregular Warfare in Afghanistan,” *Joint Forces Quarterly*, Issue 56, 1st Quarter 2010, p. 50.

¹¹⁸ U.S. House of Representatives, House Armed Services Committee, Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations, “Agency Stovepipes vs. Strategic Agility: Lessons We Need to Learn from Provincial Reconstruction Teams in Iraq and Afghanistan,” April 2008. P. 32.

¹¹⁹ See Rowland T. Berthoff, “Taft and MacArthur, 1900-1901: A Study in Civil-Military Relations,” *World Politics*, Vol. 5, No. 2 (JAN 1953), available at <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2008981>, accessed on 11 AUG 2009.

The RAND report recognizes the importance of the practical working relationship between U.S. ambassador and U.S. theater-level military commander as critical to the success of a given stability operation. However, it notes that assigning the lead to the U.S. ambassador over the senior U.S. military commander may not always be practicable, particularly where the nature or phase of military operations argues for the primacy of the U.S. military commander. Specifically, the report proposes that “the nature of the military-civilian command relationship will vary over time as the situation on the ground evolves from kinetic to largely post-kinetic operations.”¹²⁰

Security as the Key Variable

Lamb and Cinnamond argue that a key element in improving unity of effort in a COIN environment such as Afghanistan is to clarify final decision authority between military and civilian leaders. Short of formal legislation allowing the integration of civilian and military chains of command at the country level, this determination should be made based on conditions in theater. “When diplomatic and military needs sharply conflict – as they must on occasion in irregular war – who has the final say should be a function of the security situation, which could be determined on a province by province basis. Ambassador Eickenberry would have the last say...where security was good enough to allow progress toward political objectives to take priority.... In provinces where the security environment is so poor that progress toward security objectives must take precedence before political progress can be realized,...General McChrystal would resolve the issue at hand.”¹²¹

In a 2009 testimony before the Senate Armed Services Committee, LTG (Ret) David W. Barno, a former top U.S. military commander in Afghanistan, made similar recommendations. Noting that a lack of security prevents progress across all other elements of power, LTG Barno

¹²⁰ Hunter, *et al*, p. 26.

¹²¹ Lamb and Cinnamond, p. 10.

described Afghanistan as being divided into two zones: A relatively secure northern region which he labeled the “Stability Zone,” and a more dangerous and unstable southern region which he labeled the “Counterinsurgency Zone.” In the northern Stability Zone, the security environment would accommodate a diplomatic-led, centralized approach with traditional peacekeeping and reconstruction activities falling under civilian leadership. On the other hand, the dangerous security environment in the COIN Zone demands that military commanders take the lead in the civil-military effort – a military-led, decentralized approach would be required until security was improved to a more normal level. Within the COIN Zone, LTG Barno argued that military commanders must operate under a principle of “area ownership,” meaning that the local commander should be given all required resources, civilian and military, to accomplish the mission and then be held responsible for the results. Civilian staff, while not falling directly under military command, would serve in a command support role similar to that defined in joint doctrine and should have adequate legal authorities to make decisions at the local level in order to influence the situation at hand. “At day’s end, the military commander is held to account for the integrated outcome of this fused effort across his battlespace.”¹²²

Implications for Emerging Doctrine

The lessons of the Philippines as well as the observations made by RAND, Lamb and Cinnamond, and LTG (Ret) Barno more than suggest that military and civilian leaders cannot achieve unity of effort in an irregular environment by maintaining separate and equal authorities. All affirm that the security situation on the ground should determine the *de facto* primacy of either military or civilian leadership in a given area. Recognizing a single boss makes it possible to delegate authority to subordinate commanders over a variety of military and civilian

¹²² Senate Armed Services Committee Testimony given by LTG (Ret) David W. Barno, Director, Near East South Asia Center for Strategic Studies, February 26, 2009.

capabilities necessary to stabilize a given area. This improved security is achieved through a combination of positive and negative incentives from across the range of government, with the local commander responsible for the results. Finally, an unambiguous chain of command makes it clear who is in charge and facilitates transition to civilian or host nation authority when predetermined conditions are met. However, this principle of unity of command is not reflected in the emerging SSTRO joint doctrine.

The emerging joint doctrine outlined in the Military Support to SSTR Operations Joint Operating Concept acknowledges that military forces will be required to initially assume the lead in nation-building activities in an unsecure environment. It also adequately addresses the necessary transitions from military to civilian-led efforts across a variety of logical lines of operation, and that transitions within each MME will occur at different times in different regions based on improved security and the capacity of civilian agencies and the host nation to undertake these activities. But instead of being guided by the principle of unity of command, the SSTRO JOC is governed by the joint doctrine concept of Unified Action – the synchronization, coordination, and/or integration of the activities of governmental and nongovernmental entities with military operations to achieve unity of effort.¹²³ Unified Action supports and preserves the favored USG model of maintaining separate lines of authority between civilian and military components employed in the field. It relies upon a strong rapport between U.S. Ambassador and JFC that, as discussed, may or may not be replicated in subordinate echelons. As irregular warfare is inherently a decentralized effort, this arrangement places the mission at risk. Both COIN theory and doctrine maintain that military and civilian tasks blur together in an irregular

¹²³ Joint Publication 1-02, p. 575. The SSTRO JOC (p. 24) defines unified action as “the successful integration and synchronization of the multidimensional efforts of the U.S. military, U.S. Government Agencies, and coalition partners as well as private sector actors and host nation agencies in pursuit of success in all of the MMEs.”

environment and cannot be neatly separated. Maintaining separate lines of authority in an environment that requires all elements of national power to be employed under a single leader is dysfunctional and is the major inhibitor of unity of effort in a contested security environment.

Neither does the SSTRO JOC acknowledge military primacy in the absence of sustainable external civilian capacity with which to transition. The Military Support to SSTR Operations JOC assumes that “U.S. Government departments and agencies beyond DoD will develop a...rapidly deployable implementation capability with sufficient capacity for extended, sustained SSTR operations.” It then notes a “significant risk that this assumption may prove false.”¹²⁴ In fact, according to the JOC authors, “even if civilian capabilities to support SSTR operations double in the next 10-15 years, there will still be a capability gap that the military will be called upon to fill, even in a secure environment.”¹²⁵ To mitigate this risk, the JOC recommends “working with the National Security Council, as well as other applicable U.S. departments and agencies, and with the Congress to gain the support needed to build SSTR-related civilian capabilities in the interagency.”¹²⁶ This is not a near-term solution that can be implemented in time to assist with current operations. In the meantime, the military must be prepared to assume the lead as the President’s primary means of achieving other than military objectives.

Implications for Current and Future Operations

GEN McChrystal’s August 2009 assessment concluded that stabilizing Afghanistan depended upon a properly resourced COIN strategy supported by improved unity of effort and command.¹²⁷ In December 2009, after months of debate, the Obama administration authorized

¹²⁴ SSTRO JOC, p. 12.

¹²⁵ SSTRO JOC, p. 12.

¹²⁶ SSTRO JOC, p. 62.

¹²⁷ ISAF, p. 2-11.

the deployment of an additional 30,000 troops “in order to seize the initiative, while building the Afghan capacity that can allow for a responsible transition of our forces out of Afghanistan.” Specifically, these forces would “target the insurgency and secure key population centers,” and “help create the conditions for the United States to transfer responsibility to the Afghans.”¹²⁸

To accomplish the President’s objectives, GEN McChrystal intends to focus finite military and civilian resources on critical areas where the population is most threatened by insurgent violence, corruption, and coercion (similar to the “COIN” zones described by LTG (Ret) Barno).¹²⁹ Recognizing the importance of a secure environment relative to achieving progress in governance, development, and the rule of law, the proposed strategy aims to reestablish security in three stages that “will unfold at different rates and times in different geographic areas...”¹³⁰ The first and decisive stage seeks to “gain the initiative in seriously threatened, populated areas by working directly with [Afghan] institutions and people in local communities to gain their support and to diminish insurgent access and influence.” Success will require “the full range of civil-military capabilities concentrated in the priority areas.” The second stage will initiate a strategic consolidation in which Afghan security forces and government institutions increasingly take the lead for security operations that insulate the population from a return of insurgent influence. Finally, when insurgent groups can no longer challenge the legitimacy of the host

¹²⁸ The White House, Office of the Press Secretary. “Remarks by the President in Address to the Nation on the Way Forward in Afghanistan and Pakistan,” given on 1 December 2009 in Eisenhower Theater, United States Military Academy at West Point, NY. Available at <http://www.whitehouse.gov/the-press-office/remarks-president-address-nation-way-forward-afghanistan-and-pakistan>. Accessed on 13 March 2010.

¹²⁹ ISAF, p. 2-15.

¹³⁰ Ibid, p. 2-18.

nation to provide for the needs of its people, the area will transition to Afghan government control.¹³¹

Reestablishing security in such a distributive manner over time will require empowerment and decentralization of authority. Recognizing this, the proposed strategy states that “To be effective, commanders and their civilian partners must have authorities to use resources flexibly – and on their own initiative – as opportunities arise, while maintaining appropriate accountability measures. ISAF must strike the right balance between control and initiative, but err on the side of initiative.”¹³² Furthermore, the strategy emphasizes that “Command relationships must be clarified so that battle space owners at every echelon can synchronize operations in accordance with ISAF priorities, with effective control of all operations in their area of operations...”¹³³

The assessment highlights the importance of an adequate amount of civilian capacity to solidify gains and achieve demonstrable progress: “The relative level of civilian resources must be balanced with security forces, lest gains in security outpace civilian capacity for governance and economic improvements. In particular, ensuring alignment of resources for immediate and rapid expansion into newly secured areas will require integrated civil-military planning teams that establish mechanisms for rapid response.”¹³⁴ However, the report also acknowledges that “As necessary, ISAF must facilitate performance of civil-military functions wherever civilian capacity is lacking, the arrival of the civilians is delayed, or the authorities that the civilians bring prove insufficient.”¹³⁵ Although recent State Department efforts have increased civilian presence on the

¹³¹ Ibid, p. 2-19.

¹³² Ibid, p. 2-13.

¹³³ Ibid, p. 2-14.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p. 2-21.

¹³⁵ Ibid, p. 2-22.

ground in Afghanistan from 300 in March 2009 to nearly 1000 in early 2010¹³⁶, these numbers still remain inadequate to meet demand in the field, especially in the East and the South where new operations are underway to secure increasing segments of the population.¹³⁷

In an uncertain security environment with limited civilian resources, a model of initial military empowerment over all available USG resources seems to be consistent with the theory doctrine, and history of irregular warfare. Yet despite the creation of a new three-star command to coordinate and synchronize military activities among subordinate regional commands throughout Afghanistan, the ISAF strategy maintains a separate and parallel civilian chain of command. The Integrated Civil-Military Campaign Plan (ICMCP) creates a U.S. Senior Civilian Representative position at each subordinate echelon down to the Brigade Combat Team level “to coordinate activities of civilians operating under Chief of Mission authority to execute U.S. policy and guidance, serve as the civilian counterpart to the military commander, and integrate and coordinate civ-mil efforts.”¹³⁸

Despite recognizing the importance of security, and the necessity of decentralized and empowered leadership in achieving and sustaining a secure environment, maintaining a separate military and civilian chain of command remains this strategy’s biggest liability. Relying on personal relationships at every echelon to shape a coherent strategy without a formal mechanism to resolve the inevitable disagreements that will arise at each level due to a variety of local factors will eventually frustrate progress. Especially in areas where security is in doubt, civilian partners

¹³⁶ Department of State, Office of the Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, *Afghanistan and Pakistan Regional Stabilization Strategy*, Washington, D.C., February 2010, p. 3. Available at <http://www.state.gov/documents/organization/135728.pdf>.

¹³⁷ The additional 30,000 troops approved by the President will put U.S. troop strength at 98,000 by the end of 2010. Using Galula’s theory that irregular warfare effort is 80 percent political and 20 percent military, there will remain a significant civil-military gap for the duration of U.S. operations there.

¹³⁸ ISAF, p. C-1.

must yield the lead to the local military commander in applying all available resources toward achieving a secure environment upon which the success of all other efforts depend. Once security is established, the military commander must transition to support civilian efforts aimed at enhancing the host-nation's capacity to provide for its population.

But establishing a single civil-military chain of command depends upon executive and legislative action to grant the required authorities within a given theater of action. If the United States is to continue to operate in an environment of persistent irregular conflict for the foreseeable future, such formal authorities and relationships between civilian and military organizations can improve unity of effort. Given the unlikelihood of achieving an adequate balance between military and civilian capacity in the near-term, empowering the local military commander with decentralized authority in nonmilitary areas such as governance and development is the quickest way to create and sustain the security environment necessary to achieve stability and reestablish host nation sovereignty.

Conclusion

The United States today finds itself in an era of persistent irregular conflict whose root cause can be attributed to illegitimate governance within failed or failing nation states. The resulting instability cannot be wholly ignored due to the credible threat posed to U.S. national security by terrorist organizations exploiting ungoverned space as a sanctuary from which to operate. Such conditions will likely require future U.S. military and civilian agency interventions to assist a severely stressed host nation governments to avoid failure, or to assist an emerging host nation government to build a new domestic order following internal collapse or defeat in war. Success in these irregular environments will require operating in a grand strategic manner, integrating and synchronizing the effects of all elements of national power into one coherent strategy under the direction of a single empowered leader to address the root causes of instability and to restore the legitimacy of the host nation in the eyes of its population.

A combination of security concerns and a lack of civilian expeditionary capacity will require the military to assume responsibility for stability tasks better suited to civilian agencies. However, current laws mandate parallel civilian and military chains of command that separate responsibilities from the authority necessary to direct the activities of all elements of national power toward achieving national security objectives. This separation of civilian authority from military responsibility makes it impossible to operate in a grand strategic manner as demanded by the character of irregular war and inhibits unity of effort. In order to improve unity of effort among USG departments and agencies conducting stability operations, the President should empower the military joint force commander to coordinate all aspects of the USG effort to accomplish political and military goals until security, civilian capacity, and political conditions allow transition to civilian or host nation leadership.

The observations made by RAND, Lamb and Cinnamond, and LTG (Ret) Barno reinforce the major lesson of irregular warfare learned by the U.S. Army once upon a time in the Philippines: Empower a single leader with authority over all available USG capabilities to accomplish the mission. Theory, doctrine and history agree that such empowerment will clarify lines of authority and allow a phased transition over time, with the level of security and civilian or host nation capacity by location dictating the primacy of military or civilian leader.

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